

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 09024 262213Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SY-05 SSO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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O R 262155Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4086

INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS VE ASEC

SUBJECT: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING SUSPECT ALLEGEDLY TORTURED
TO DEATH

REF: CARACAS 8896

1. SENSATIONALIST AFTERNOON DAILY EL MUNDO JULY 26 FRONT-PAGED STORY OF DEATH OF JORGE RODRIGUEZ, SECRETARY GENERAL OF SOCIALIST LEAGUE, ALLEGED SUSPECT IN THE KIDNAPPING OF U.S. INDUSTRIALIST WILLIAM NIEHOUS. STORY SAID RODRIGUEZ ALONG WITH FOUR OTHER PERSONS HAD BEEN DETAINED JULY 23 BY DISIP AGENTS AND THAT RODRIGUEZ DIED IN JAIL FOLLOWING DAY. RODRIGUEZ'S DEATH WAS REPORTEDLY CONFIRMED BY FISCAL GENERAL JOSE RAMON MEDINA JULY 26 TO MAS-INDEPENDENT DEPUTY JOSE VICENTE RANGEL. OFFICIALLY, RODRIGUEZ'S DEATH WAS ATTRIBUTED TO CARDIAC ARREST. MEDINA HAS ASSIGNED TWO MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF TO INVESTIGATE RODRIGUEZ'S DEATH. RANGEL TOLD EL MUNDO THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT RODRIGUEZ DIED FROM DISPLACEMENT OF INTERNAL ORGANS AND SEVEN BROKEN RIBS AND THAT HE INTENDS TO RAISE THE MATTER IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES TONIGHT, JULY 26.

2. AP HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT INTERIOR MINISTER OCTAVIO LEPAJE HELD PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY AT WHICH HE REVEALED
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PAGE 02 CARACA 09024 262213Z

THAT RODRIGUEZ HAD DIED JULY 24 WHILE IN POLICE CUSTODY. LEPAJE

SAID THAT 12 PEOPLE WERE DETAINED JULY 23 BY THE POLICE FOR
QUESTIONING IN CONNECTION WITH THE NIEHOUS CASE. HE ALSO STATED
THAT TWO CONGRESSIONAL DEPUTIES, A MEP DEPUTY AND AN INDEPENDENT-
LEFTIST DEPUTY WERE INVOLVED IN THE CASE BUT HAD NOT BEEN
ARRESTED BECAUSE OF PARLIAMENTARY IMMUNITY.
VAKY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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To: STATE
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